

# Arden:

## Here's How It Works

This is a brief guide to how government works in the Village of Arden. A complete guide, including governing documents, town ordinances, and detailed committee descriptions is available from the Town Secretary upon request.

We have a "town meeting" form of government; decision-making power resides in the town meeting itself, rather than in elected representatives. The **trustees** and **assessors** also have specific powers and duties separate from the town meeting.

**Town meetings** are held on the fourth Monday of January, March, June and September at 7:30 in the Gild Hall. You can vote if you are a resident over 18 years of age and have lived in Arden for 6 months. Town meetings are open to the public, but only residents may vote; leaseholders who are not also residents may not vote.

The day-to-day tasks of running the village are handled by **standing committees**: these residents check the roads for potholes, prepare the budget, and serve the community in many ways. If you have never served on a committee, please consider it. The village needs your help to run smoothly and democratically.

Some committees (Auditing, Budget) meet at one time of the year, maybe for only a few meetings, and their task is done. Some are active year round (Civic, Buzz Ware Village Center.) If you are a "hands-on" type, or an "idea" person, have a knowledge of road repair, or are a parent who wants to make sure our playgrounds are in good shape, there is a committee for you.

You can volunteer to run for a committee or get more information by contacting the committee chairperson. Some people may tell you that new people never get elected, but that isn't true. New residents are welcome and encouraged to get involved.

### Referendums

Two important elections are held each November: the Board of Assessors (see other side) and the Budget Referendum. Ballots are mailed to every eligible voter. The budget must be approved by a majority of *all eligible voters*, not just a simple majority of people who vote.

### Standing Committees

Nominations are made at the January town meeting and may continue up to the March Advisory meeting. Election is at the March meeting. Two names must be nominated for each position open. All terms are for two years.

### Archives Committee

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Lisa Mullinax, 529-7399*

The Archives Committee preserves the history of the village by collecting and preserving documents, photos, etc.; presenting displays and programs about Arden's past, its people and its arts; and running the Arden Craft Shop Museum along with representatives of Ardentown and Ardencroft. The committee seeks grants to support the museum. Many residents volunteer to help the committee with its projects.

### Auditing Committee

*3 members, 2 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Contact: Cookie Ohlson, 529-7959*

The Auditing Committee meets in June to examine specific accounts in the general ledgers of the town and trustees to assure that they are in agreement with the audit done by the CPA firm of Corcoran and Co., P.A. The Auditing Committee reports to the June Town Assembly.

### Budget Committee

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Jeff Politis, 529-9146*

The Budget Committee organizes past and coming-year village expenditures for presentation to the September Town Assembly. It also prepares a three-year projection for the March Assembly. The September report forms the basis of the annual budget referendum. To prepare reports, committee members communicate with the other standing committees, the town secretary, treasurer and the trustees. This information-gathering activity provides an excellent overview of Arden's governmental structure and its finances.

### Buzz Ware Village Center Committee

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Willard Glenn, 529-7862*

The BWVC Committee oversees maintenance, security and use of the center (2119 The Highway), which is owned by the village and formerly was our community school. The committee also administers leases and contracts for the building and plans programs of interest to the community. This building is a community resource, and the committee encourages its use by residents. Committee meetings are held in the evening on a monthly basis, year round.

### Civic Committee

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Susan Rothrock, 373-5270*

The Civic Committee supervises maintenance and repair of roads, paths, greens and storm sewers. This includes determining when repairs are needed, soliciting bids, and

Revised January 2009

For the latest update, go to <http://arden.delaware.gov>

hiring contractors. The committee acts as a liaison with the trash collection and recycling companies. The Civic Committee also deals with encroachment issues on the rights-of-way. **ardencivic@theardens.com**

### **Community Planning Committee**

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Ray Seigfried, 475-2721*

The Community Planning Committee plans the “physical and cultural future of the community.” It works with other committees to plan projects that have a major impact on the village, such as watershed protection, landscape plans for the greens, Harvey Road traffic, and historic landmark status. It monitors county and state issues (such as re-zonings) and also oversees the Memorial Garden (cemetery). **planning@theardens.com**

### **Forest Committee**

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Mary Marconi, 475-6819*

The Forest Committee implements Arden's Forest Stewardship Policy, oversees trail improvement, tree felling in the woods, plant removal, and strives to prevent encroachment and stream erosion. The committee also organizes an annual woods cleanup along with Ardentown and Ardencroft. **forest@theardens.com**

### **Playground Committee**

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Mary Vernon, 475-4440*

The Playground Committee assures that the playground equipment on the Arden Green and Sherwood Green is in good, safe condition. The committee inspects the equipment every other month during the winter and every month during the summer. Members spread mulch in the play areas as needed and contract for painting and repair. They also recommend purchase of new equipment.

### **Registration Committee**

*5 members; 2 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Cecilia Vore, 475-1976*

The Registration Committee conducts town elections and the annual referendum on the budget and Board of Assessors (held in the fall, after the September town meeting). Keeping track of the census and the list of registered voters are additional responsibilities of the committee. **e-mail: registration@theardens.com**

### **Safety Committee**

*5 members; 3 elected in odd-numbered years*

*Chairperson: Denis O'Regan, 529-1269*

Broadly speaking, the committee handles safety issues. It replaces and installs stop signs, no parking signs, etc., throughout the town. It oversees the Town Watch for the three Ardens and acts as liaison with the New Castle County Police, but it does NOT handle complaints that should be referred to the police. You can contact the committee at: **ardensafety@theardens.com**

## *Other Committees and Officers*

### **Trustees**

*Connie McKinney, Mike Curtis, Carl Falco*

*Office: 475-7980*

The trustees collect the land rent, pay county and school taxes, oversee administrative costs of the trust, and see that the money remaining is spent in accordance with the approved budget. They also invest funds and approve the transfer of leases when houses are sold. Occasionally they decide on requests to divide lots or adjust boundaries (subject to zoning restrictions); give authorization to cut trees on leaseholds; deal with encroachment issues, housing code violations, and other matters related to the leaseholds as designated by the Deed of Trust. Often the trustees communicate with outside agencies affecting the welfare of the village. When a vacancy occurs, the remaining two trustees solicit input from the residents and nominate a new trustee. The nominee is then approved or disapproved in a referendum of all eligible voters. Election is for life.

### **Advisory Committee**

*Chairperson: Bill Theis, 475-1995*

The Advisory Committee is made up of the chairpersons of all the standing committees, plus the town officers, the senior trustee, and the chair of the Board of Assessors. It acts as a coordinating committee and sets the agenda for the town meetings. Chairperson of the Advisory Committee is elected each year at the March meeting. Any eligible voter may be nominated as chairperson.

### **Board of Assessors**

*7 members, elected annually by referendum*

The Board of Assessors establishes the land rent rates for Arden leaseholds, according to the Georgist principle of “full rental value” of the land. Since Henry George himself never spelled out how to calculate “full rental value,” this is no simple task. Nominations are made at the September town meeting; election is by referendum in the fall, using the Hare System of Proportional Representation.

### **Town officers (\* indicates salaried position)**

*Elected for one-year terms at the March meeting:*

#### **Advisory Committee chairperson**

*(see “Advisory Committee”)*

#### **Town Assembly chairperson** *Steven Threefoot, 475-3333*

Conducts town meetings, is sometimes instructed to represent the town in an official capacity, heads special committees.

#### **Town secretary\*** *Larry Walker, 475-1098*

*Elected for a two-year term in even-numbered years:*

#### **Town treasurer** *David Michelson, c.215-467-3895*

### **Non-elected positions**

**Administrative assistant to the trustees\*:** *Elizabeth Varley*, appointed by trustees. **Memorial Garden Representative:** *Ruth Bean*, appointed by Community Planning.